

Message Text

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ACTION OES-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 NEA-10 IO-11 ISO-00 ERDA-05

CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01

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INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION IAEA VIENNA

USMISSION EEC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 1718

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, TECH, JA

SUBJ: JAPAN AND NPT: GOJ PUSH FOR RATIFICATION

REF: STATE 009593

SUMMARY: SENIOR GOJ AND LDP LEADERS SEEM RESOLVED TO RATIFY THE NPT EARLY IN THE CURRENT DIET SESSION. IMPETUS STEMS A) FROM CONCERN THAT FAILURE TO RATIFY WILL RAISE QUESTIONS ABOUT JAPAN'S CREDIBILITY IN INTERNATIONAL CIRCLES, PARTICULARLY ON DISARMAMENT ISSUES, AND B) FROM ALARM IN INDUSTRIAL CIRCLES THAT NUCLEAR SUPPLIERS ARE TIGHTENING CONTROL ON EXPORTS WHICH COULD CAUSE SUPPLY DIFFICULTIES FOR JAPANESE INDUSTRY. DESPITE THESE EFFORTS, OPPOSITION TO RATIFICATION STILL REMAINS AMONG A CLUTCH OF ULTRA CONSERVATIVES AND IN THE FORMAL JSP POSITION. TO SWEETEN THE PACKAGE FOR ULTRA CONSERVATIVES IN LDP THE GOJ/LDP LEADERS AT ONE POINT AT LEAST

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IMPLICITLY LINKED NPT RATIFICATION WITH ROK CONTINENTAL SHELF

TREATY RATIFICATION. PREDICTABLY, HOWEVER, JSP REACTION TO THIS LINKAGE HAS BEEN NEGATIVE. FONOFF NOW DENIES THAT LINKAGE EXISTS. WHILE THESE PROBLEMS SEEM SURMOUNTABLE IF THE LDP LEADERSHIP MEANS BUSINESS, EARLY DIET DISSOLUTION COULD PREVENT NPT RATIFICATION, FOR REASONS UNRELATED TO NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION. END SUMMARY.

1. THE GOJ SEEMS RESOLVED TO RATIFY THE NPT IN THE CURRENT DIET SESSION. THE ATMOSPHERE SURROUNDING RATIFICATION HAS IMPROVED CONSIDERABLY SINCE THE LAST ATTEMPT TO RATIFY LAST JUNE IN THE SCARY DAYS FOLLOWING EVENTS IN INDOCHINA. LEADING THE RATIFICATION DRIVE ARE PM MIKI, FONMIN MIYAZAWA AND THE FONOFF, LDP SECY GENERAL NAKASONE, AND INDUSTRIAL CIRCLES, THE LATTER ALARMED THAT FAILURE TO RATIFY WILL JEOPARDIZE ACCESS TO NUCLEAR SUPPLIES. RATIFICATION ALSO ENJOYS BROAD AND VIGOROUS SUPPORT FROM THE PRESS.

2. IMPETUS FOR RATIFICATION COMES FROM BELIEF THAT FAILURE TO RATIFY WILL IMPAIR JAPANESE CREDIBILITY INTERNATIONALLY, PARTICULARLY ON DISARMAMENT ISSUES, REGARDING WHICH JAPAN SEEKS A DETERMINED AND UNEQUIVOCAL ROLE. A SECOND MAJOR FACTOR, PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT TO INDUSTRIAL CIRCLES, IS THE TIGHTENING OF RESTRICTIONS BY SUPPLIERS ON EXPORTS OF NUCLEAR MATERIALS, EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY, SUCH AS THROUGH THE LONDON SUPPLIERS CONFERENCE. INDUSTRY IS NOW CONVINCED THAT FUTURE NUCLEAR MATERIAL SUPPLY IS RELATED TO ACTION ON NPT. BEARING THIS OUT IN PRACTICAL TERMS, MITI ATOMIC ENERGY DIVISION DIRECTOR TOLD US LAST WEEK THAT INDUSTRY IS ALARMED TO DISCOVER THAT THE US IS APPLYING REGULATIONS EVEN STRICTER THAN THE ZANGGER AND LONDON SUPPLIER LITS. (HE CITED ZIRCONIUM PLATES AS AN EXAMPLE.) FINALLY, PM MIKI'S CREDIBILITY IS INCREASINGLY AT STAKE SINCE HE REPEATEDLY HAS STATED PUBLICLY THAT JAPAN WOULD PROCEED WITH RATIFICATION. HIS ASSURANCES TO PRES FORD ADD PRESSURE TO THIS COMMITMENT.

3. STILL OPPOSING RATIFICATION ARE A HANDFUL OF ULTRA CONSERVATIVE LDP RECALCITRANTS IN THE UPPER HOUSE OF THE DIET. THEY TAKE ENCOURAGEMENT FROM MANY OTHERS IN THE LDP CONSERVATIVE WING WHO DO NOT WISH TO BE PUBLICLY ON RECORD AS OPPOSING THE NPT. WHILE EXTENSIVE

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EFFORTS HAVE BEEN MADE WITH THE PROFESSED NPT OPPONENTS, EVEN AT ONE POINT LINKING NPT RATIFICATION WITH THE ROK CONTINENTAL SHELF AGREEMENT, FAVORED BY PARTY CONSERVATIVES, WE ARE STILL HEARING NEGATIVE NOISES FROM LDP SOURCES. MOREOVER, LINKAGE OF NPT AND THE ROK AGREEMENT OFFENDS THE JSP AND, IF A LINKAGE IS MADE, THE PRESENT JSP POSITION OF PRO-FORMA OPPOSITION TO NPT COULD TURN INTO A DETERMINED IDEOLOGICAL CAMPAIGN. FONOFF NOW DENIES THAT LINKAGE EXISTS.

4. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, TOP GOJ/LDP LEADERS SEEM RESOLVED TO PUSH FOR RATIFICATION AS THE MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVE DURING THE CURRENT DIET SESSION. (THERE ARE, HOWEVER, HIGHER PRIORITY DOMESTIC ITEMS SUCH AS THE BUDGET.) FONOFF UN BUREAU DIRGEN OKAWA TOLD THE DCM LATE LAST WEEK THAT HE (AND, WE KNOW, HIS SUBORDINATES) ARE WORKING FULL-TIME TO SECURE NPT RATIFICATION. OKAWA SAID THE GOJ PLANS TO PUSH FOR RATIFICATION EARLY IN THE SESSION. IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE BUDGET MOVES THROUGH COMMITTEE AND THE LOWER HOUSE. (THERE IS EVEN PRESS DISCUSSION PRESENTLY OF CONSIDERATION OF THE NPT IN LOWER HOUSE COMMITTEE AS EARLY AS NEXT WEEK WITH THE OBJECT OF FULL HOUSE PASSAGE BY THE END OF FEBRUARY. WHILE THERE IS NOTHING IN THEORY TO PRECLUDE THIS APPROACH, THERE HAS BEEN NO RECENT EXAMPLE WHERE A CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE SUCH AS THE NPT WAS TAKEN UP BEFORE LOWER HOUSE BUDGET PASSAGE.) MENTIONING LDP SECY GENERAL NAKASONE, OKAWA SAID THAT KEY LDP DIETMEN ARE ACTIVELY WORKING FOR RATIFICATION. AS WE HAVE HEARD FROM SEVERAL SOURCES (INCLUDING LDP FOREIGN AFFAIRS COUNCIL HEAD NAOKICHI KITAZAWA HIMSELF), OKAWA SAID MANY FORMER OPPONENTS OF NPT LIKE KITAZAWA NO LONGER OPPOSE RATIFICATION. KITAZAWA URGED "CAUTION" ON RATIFICATION AS RECENTLY AS LAST JUNE. AS A RESULT, OKAWA EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT THE DIET WOULD RATIFY, UNLESS DISSOLUTION OF THE DIET UPSET THE GOJ TIMETABLE. FONOFF ALSO BELIEVES CURRENT DIET SESSION IS LAST BEST TIME IN NEXT 2-3 YEARS FOR RATIFICATION. (REFLECTING PERSISTENT JAPANESE DOUBTS ABOUT USG ATTITUDES TOWARD NPT, OKAWA ASKED THE DCM WHAT THE USG "REALLY THINKS" ABOUT NPT. HE WAS PROPERLY REASSURED. OKAWA ALSO COMMENTED THAT IT WOULD BE "DISASTROUS" IF THE USG MADE ANY STATEMENT TO EFFECT THAT RATIFICATION OR NON-RATIFICATION OF NPT WOULD NOT AFFECT TRANSFER OF NUCLEAR MATERIALS. WE ASSURED HIM THAT WE DID NOT ANTICIPATE SUCH A STATEMENT.)

5. AS A RESULT OF THESE EXTENSIVE EFFORTS BY GOJ/LDP LEADERS, BOLSTERED BY EFFECTIVE INDUSTRIAL SUPPORT, THE PROSPECTS FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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RATIFICATION ARE BETTER THAN THEY HAVE EVER BEEN. EVEN THE HARD-CORE OPPOSITION BY A FEW ULTRA CONSERVATIVES IN THE UPPER HOUSE AND JSP AMBIVALENCE TOWARD RATIFICATION SEEM TO BE SURMOUNTABLE OBSTACLES IF THE LDP LEADERSHIP MEANS BUSINESS. ALTHOUGH UPRECEDED FOR A MAJOR TREATY LIKE THE NPT, THE GOJ COULD THEORETICALLY RATIFY NPT THIRTY DAYS AFTER LOWER HOUSE PASSAGE WITHOUT UPPER HOUSE APPROVAL.

6. THE REAL THREATS TO SUCCESS, HOWEVER, ARE TIME AND THE POSSIBLE EARLY DISSOLUTION OF THE DIET. BUDGET AND BOND ISSUE DELIBERATIONS COULD BE PROTRACTED AND, IF AS WE SUSPECT THE GOVERNMENT ELECTS TO CONSIDER NPT RATIFICATION ONLY AFTER LOWER HOUSE BUDGET PASSAGE, PM MIKI'S KNOWN PREFERENCE TO APRIL-MAY DISSOLUTIONS COULD PREMATURELY END NPT CHANCES. NPT RATIFICATION COULD SIMPLY BE THE VICTIM OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS, UNRELATED TO THE NPT ITSELF.

THUS, WHILE WE ARE MORE HOPEFUL ABOUT RATIFICATION PROSPECTS THAN
IN THE PAST, WE PREFER TO WAIT FOR THE DRAMA TO UNFOLD A BIT
FURTHER BEFORE VENTURING FIRM PREDICTION.
HODGSON

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